



# Fort Pulaski National Monument

## 2015 Business Plan



**Produced by  
National Park Service  
Business Management Group  
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### **National Park Business Plan Process**

Business planning is an essential tool for improving the fiscal health of national parks. The National Park Service (NPS) has commissioned this report at Fort Pulaski National Monument in order to answer such questions as: What is the business of this park unit? How does it define its key operational and strategic priorities over the next three to five years? How will the park allocate its finite resources in order to most effectively accomplish its goals? By answering these questions, Fort Pulaski National Park (FOPU) will be better equipped to manage its financial and operational resources, mitigate the challenges of the coming years, and continue to ensure the enjoyment of all FOPU staff, visitors, and volunteers.

Accordingly, this plan articulates the financial and operational status of Fort Pulaski National Monument. It was written in 2014 using the most recent financial data available. Since 2013 was an anomalous budget year due to budget sequestration, a government shutdown, and changes to the NPS financial management system, information was incorporated from multiple years to provide the most contextually appropriate financial and operational information whenever possible.

Using the best historical data and predictive modeling available, this plan provides a basic foundation for future decision making while familiarizing readers with the range of dynamics that shape the management of a national park unit in the twenty-first century.

### **National Park Service Mission:**

The National Park Service preserves unimpaired the natural and cultural resources and intrinsic values of the national park system for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations. The National Park Service cooperates with partners to extend the benefits of natural and cultural resource conservation and outdoor recreation throughout this country and the world.



*Fort Pulaski National Monument hosts a number of local military events throughout the year.*

*Cover: The artillery of Fort Pulaski "aims for the moon" as it rises above the terreplein of the fort.*

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## Message from the Superintendent

On behalf of the staff, friends, and partners of Fort Pulaski National Monument, it is my privilege to present the Fort Pulaski National Monument Business Plan that will enable us to focus our resources toward our goals and track our progress. The Business Plan was developed from the Fort Pulaski General Management Plan (2013), State of the Parks Document (2014), and significant contributions from those who have the deepest appreciation for the nature and history of the park: our staff, volunteers, friends, and partners. With this input, the park goals were further honed by our management team through detailed operational and financial analyses that were provided by our talented business plan interns.

As a unit of the National Park Service (NPS), Fort Pulaski has an unambiguous mission to preserve its significant natural and cultural resources, and to provide opportunities for our national and international visitors to understand and enjoy them. However, budgets have remained stagnant and no longer rise with inflation, while our operational needs diverge even further from our base funding. We are also faced with more demanding challenges from climate change and other external factors. In light of these challenges, how we manage the Monument to best realize our mission requires careful consideration in our operational and financial planning as well as creative thinking.

This plan identifies where we currently stand and sets out a list of priorities and goals for the next five years. We seek to find operational efficiencies and accountability, better understand and respond to our visitors, improve the stewardship of our cultural and natural resources, and work with our many friends and partners. It articulates how we want to best utilize our human and financial resources in the context of our anticipated constrictive budget. Our planning also revealed new opportunities for us to cultivate and leverage the rich historical, educational and institutional capacity of the greater Tybee and Savannah community.

As the NPS nears its centennial anniversary, Fort Pulaski strives to continue to celebrate its unique history while embracing modern life and best practices in park management. Remaining relevant to an increasingly diverse and technologically savvy America requires an affirmative commitment and dedicated plan of action. We feel that this business plan provides us with a path forward to embrace the opportunities and challenges of the twenty-first century, and the second century of the National Park Service.



**Melissa Memory**  
Superintendent



*Superintendent Melissa Memory.*

**Fort Pulaski has an unambiguous mission to preserve its significant natural and cultural resources, and to provide opportunities for our national and international visitors to understand and enjoy them.**



*Left: Drawing of Fort Pulaski, viewed from above, facing east.  
Below: Low tide on Cockspur Island reveals a sandy beach.*

Fort Pulaski National Monument (FOPU) is a jewel of a destination in an area already known for its cultural charm and its recreational opportunities. Savannah, Georgia, founded in 1733 by James Oglethorpe, contains one of the largest and best-preserved National Historic Landmark districts in the United States and is located just a few miles inland from Fort Pulaski. It is almost impossible to avoid passing under Savannah's iconic Spanish moss-covered oak trees en route to the fort. Four miles to the east of Fort Pulaski lie the beaches of Tybee Island, a vacation destination for families from all over the Southeast and a hub for water based activities such as fishing, kayaking, and sailing. Tybee also features historic sites, including the Tybee Lighthouse, Fort Screven, and the location of the Union batteries that ultimately defeated the garrison at Fort Pulaski.

Between Tybee Island and Savannah sits Fort Pulaski, covering 5,623 acres of land on two distinct geographic locations: McQueens Island and Cockspur Island. McQueens Island is the largest destination by land mass at the park and is characterized by the pristine coastal Georgian salt marsh (see text box on page 5). It is home to numerous regionally noteworthy fauna and flora and represents additional potential for recreation and natural solitude. Cockspur Island is located at the mouth of the Savannah River and contains culturally and historically significant sites, as well as all visitor and administration services associated with Fort Pulaski. Principal among the historic resources are the fort itself and the Cockspur Lighthouse, which was operational from 1848 until 1909. Visitor amenities include river beaches, picnic areas, walking trails, and fishing spots. Cockspur Island is also home to the Bar Pilots Association and Tybee Island Coast Guard Station. Recreational visitors access Cockspur Island via US-80E and the South Channel Bridge.



## Key Themes

The following key themes emerged during the business planning process at Fort Pulaski National Monument. Some are driven by inherent features of the park—location, history, and climate. Others reflect deliberate management decisions. These themes will be discussed in more detail throughout the pages that follow.



*Sunset over the South Channel Bridge.*

1

### Balancing Mandates

Fort Pulaski's authorizing legislation and subsequent General Management Plan focus on the significance of the use of rifled cannons against a masonry fortification during the Battle of Fort Pulaski on April 10, 1862. However, the park has a broader significance, which has grown over time to include other historical, cultural, and natural resources like the batteries, lighthouse, and salt marshes. Fort Pulaski must balance the traditional stories of the battle with interpretation of the construction village, lighthouse, and natural resources on the site.

2

### Navigating Staff Transition

The park is in transition, after recent turnover from retirements and moves, and the hiring of a new superintendent. This turnover enabled the park to weather recent financial challenges, such as the FY 2013 budget sequestration, through savings gained from lapsed positions. Fort Pulaski now has an opportunity to make strategic staffing decisions that are financially viable, are rooted in core park priorities, and that will best serve park visitors and resources.

3

### Preserving Historic Structures

Fort Pulaski's precious cultural, historical, and natural resources are increasingly at risk from a variety of fronts, and the park will have to bolster its resource management capacity to meet this challenge. As a coastal fort, climate change and increased riparian traffic in the Savannah River threaten precious archeological resources on Cockspur Island's North Pier. Additionally, the fort itself is 165 years old and requires specialized trade skills for its preservation, some of which are increasingly difficult to support in the workforce.



*Great Blue Heron perched on Fort Pulaski.*

## 4

### Leveraging Partnerships

With a small staff, Fort Pulaski is committed to leveraging each hour of staff time through partnerships. Partners include other Department of Interior units to share services, educational and historical associations in the area to enhance understanding of different stories, and Savannah and Tybee Island cultural and tourism groups to create connections to Fort Pulaski's story for new audiences.

### McQueens Island

The salt marsh that makes up McQueens Island is an ecological wonder. Neither wholly marine nor terrestrial, the dominating features revolve around the dramatically changing tides (up to ten feet) and the unique salinity of the water. The incoming tide nourishes the grasses, and the outgoing tide transports nutrients to the sea, enabling the salt marsh to serve as a nursery for important marine life—the loss of which would severely affect the local fishing and tourism industries. The salinity ensures that *Spartina alterniflora*, the uniquely evolved plant responsible for the marsh's billowing beauty, has a welcoming environment in which to thrive. As a proposed Wilderness Site and home to the popular 6-mile Rails-to-Trails path that affords visitors the opportunity to appreciate such splendor, McQueens Island beautifully complements the rest of Fort Pulaski's natural resources.

## History

Built primarily by skilled enslaved persons throughout the 1830s and 1840s, Fort Pulaski is an approximately twenty-five million brick architectural and engineering achievement. In 1816, after recognizing serious defensive deficiencies during the War of 1812, Congress authorized the armed forces to create what is known as the “Third System of Forts,” designed to protect strategic coastal locations. Since it was constructed during peacetime, the fort, considered state-of-the-art at the time, (see text box) did not see a full garrison of troops until the eve of the Civil War, some 30 years later.

The battle for which Fort Pulaski gains its renown is the last in a series of events that started in 1860 when South Carolina announced its secession from the United States. Fearing that the US government would reinforce Fort Pulaski, Georgia Governor Joseph Brown instructed the Savannah-based militia to occupy the fort. This act set the stage for a major military advancement 15 months later when, in April of 1862, the Union Army commenced an artillery attack on the fort from Tybee Island. At the time, such a distance was considered to be insurmountable for traditional artillery. Although theretofore unproven, new rifled cannons (see text box on page 7) used by the Union Army decimated the fort’s thick walls, and within 32 hours the Confederate commander was forced to concede. As a result, the Union inched closer to

economically suffocating the Confederacy as per General Winfield Scott’s Anaconda Plan to blockade ports and control waterways. Most significantly, military strategy was changed forever as masonry forts around the world were proven obsolete in the face of rifled cannons.

After the decisive battle, Union forces employed skilled freed slaves to repair the structural damage to the fort. For the remainder of the war Fort Pulaski saw no active military engagements but played an important role as a prison; the Confederate Secretaries of State, Treasury and War were all incarcerated at the fort after the war ended. In addition, a group of southern soldiers nicknamed “The Immortal Six Hundred” endured a harsh, cold winter and poor treatment as prisoners in the fort during the last winter of the war. Although most survived, the thirteen who did not were buried at the fort and are memorialized there today.

After the Civil War, Cockspur Island remained integral to America’s military strategy as the Department of War constructed additional defenses on the island during the Spanish-American War, as well as both World Wars.

*From left: The aftermath of the Battle of Fort Pulaski, including the breach on the southeast corner; from a Harper’s publication of the times, this drawing depicts the furious battle on April 11, 1862 from the perspective of the Union soldiers.*

*Enslaved people sought freedom on Cockspur Island during the Civil War.  
Fort Pulaski is an Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Site.*

### A New Weapon vs. a Trusted Stalwart

When the Georgia state troops occupied Fort Pulaski, many considered it to be an invincible structure due to its massive, 7.5-ft thick brick walls. The US Chief of Engineers said, “you might as well bombard the Rocky Mountains” and a Union general even suggested that artillery would do no more than “shake the walls.” Yet Captain Quincy Gillmore, commander of the Union forces tasked with taking the fort, had a new tool at his disposal—the rifled cannon, which fired smaller but faster and more accurate armaments due to the “rifling,” or grooves, inside the cannon barrel. This weapon had shown impressive results at a similar distance during preliminary tests, but had not been tested on walls of Fort Pulaski’s strength. Gillmore’s attack changed history, successfully penetrating Fort Pulaski’s “unbreachable” walls in fewer than two days of battle.



*30-pound Parrott rifled cannon, an example of the type of rifled cannons used to bombard Fort Pulaski.*

## Legislation

The 1906 Antiquities Act paved the way for the legislative naissance of Fort Pulaski National Monument. The War Department, then serving as steward of Fort Pulaski, nominated the historic monument as a site worthy of preservation under the American Antiquities Act in 1915. Many parties were interested in moving quickly, but the onset of World War I forced a significant delay in efforts to institutionalize the site. The delay lasted until October 15, 1924, when President Calvin Coolidge signed into law the proclamation designating Fort Pulaski an official national monument.

The initial legislation only covered the land directly associated with the footprint of the fort, which was no more than 20 acres. In 1935, the State of Georgia donated 300 acres to the monument, which included land on the eastern end of Cockspur Island, and a year later Congress extended the western boundary to include another 200 acres. At this point, enough land had been set aside and interest in the activities on the island had grown to necessitate the construction of the South Channel Bridge. In 1939, the state once again donated land, this time 5,000 acres of salt marsh on McQueens Island. In 1959, two final acres associated with the recently decommissioned Cockspur Lighthouse were added to Fort Pulaski National Monument.

## Casimir Pulaski

Known as the “Soldier of Liberty,” Casimir Pulaski was a born leader and freedom fighter. After being exiled by Russia in the mid-18th Century for fighting for Polish liberty, he met Benjamin Franklin and became interested in the plight of the fledgling colonies against the British Empire. Known for rescuing George Washington at Brandywine, spending his personal money to supply his men, and executing brilliant tactical operations, Pulaski was a living legend by the time he was 30 years of age. In fact, after Pulaski was wounded by artillery fire in the Siege of Savannah of 1779, the British were so impressed with his bravery that they allowed his men to carry him off the battlefield where he ultimately succumbed to his injuries.

For his dedication to the American cause, Pulaski was granted honorary American citizenship in 2009. He is one of only seven people to receive such an honor.



Count Casimir Pulaski, the namesake for Fort Pulaski.



*Confederate reenactors fire 12-pdr field howitzers during the park's 146th anniversary of the Battle of Fort Pulaski.*

## Mission and Purpose

The purposes of Fort Pulaski National Monument are directly linked to the ideals associated with its preservation when President Coolidge signed the enabling legislation in 1924. Its mission is to preserve and protect:

- The nineteenth century masonry fort and its associated structures, and interpret its roles in coastal fortifications, military technology, and the Civil War;
- Other military structures, other government structures, and archeological resources associated with various military developments and fortifications on Cockspur Island; and
- Approximately 5,000 acres of nearly pristine salt marsh on McQueens and Cockspur islands that constitute the largest portion of the national monument and to interpret this important coastal ecology for the education, inspiration, and enjoyment of the visitor.

## Visitation

Many types of visitors are drawn to Fort Pulaski each year. Some are historians or descendants seeking an exciting glimpse of the site of key events in Georgia and military history, while others are out-of-town vacationers looking for a National Park Service experience and educational activity for the family. Another large group consists of locals who come to fish, bird watch, picnic in the park, or walk their dogs on the well-preserved nature trails. All visitors are bound by a common appreciation of the cultural and natural resources and programming available at Fort Pulaski National Monument.

On average, approximately 362,000 patrons have visited Fort Pulaski per year since 1985. Each day, the park sees about 1,000 visitors. Recently, annual visitation has sharply increased, with 2009 seeing the third-most visitors in park history (435,000) and all years since 2007 besting the historical average.

Despite a small seasonal spike in visitation during the late spring and summer, Fort Pulaski can find itself busy on any day of the week during any month of the year. Weekends are busier than weekdays due to increased programmatic attractions like Junior Ranger activities and black powder demonstrations. Visitation has two daily peaks, one around 11:30 a.m. and the second around 2:30 p.m., maintaining staff engagement throughout the day. The park sustains high visitation throughout the year. Even the least popular winter months average almost 750 visitors a day and can easily attract 1,000 visitors per day around holidays.

Each day, the  
park sees about  
**1,000**  
visitors.

## Visitation



*By taking a hands-on approach with visitors, Fort Pulaski National Monument staff help foster awareness, appreciation, and stewardship with park visitors.*

## Partnerships

Partnerships provide financial, research, and educational support for the park, enabling Fort Pulaski to increase its capacity and enhance protection of its precious natural and cultural resources.

**Eastern National:** Eastern National is a regional organization that supports the interpretive and educational activities of the National Park Service. At Fort Pulaski, Eastern National maintains two stores—the fort’s “Sutler Store,” named for Civil War-era army provisioners, and the book and museum shop in the visitor center. They have three full-time employees, and use Volunteers in the Park (VIP) support to fully staff their work. They support Fort Pulaski by donating a portion of the profits from sales in the gift shops to enhance interpretive programs at the park.

**Friends of the Cockspur Island Lighthouse:** Friends of the Cockspur Island Lighthouse is a 501(c)3 non-profit working toward the restoration of the Cockspur Island Lighthouse, including conducting fundraising and educational outreach activities for the Lighthouse. This group recently supported an estimate of the historical restoration needs of the lighthouse and, in 2014, conducted an oyster bed project to restore the oyster population around the lighthouse. The group also signed a formalized NPS “Friends Group” agreement in 2014, which enables them to raise money on behalf of the park.

**Cockspur Island Residents:** Cockspur Island lies in a strategic position right at the mouth of the Savannah River, the primary route into the Port of Savannah. This position makes the island a good location for Cockspur Island’s other residents – the US Coast Guard Station Tybee and the Savannah Pilots Association. The US Coast Guard has had a presence on the island since 1952; the relationship was formalized in a special use permit in 1960 and then an interagency agreement in 1980 that allowed the Coast Guard to use 1.85 acres of National Park Service land on the island for a search and rescue station. The Savannah Pilots Association has inhabited the island since 1768, guiding ships through the navigationally challenging waters of the Savannah River. Public Law 112-69, the “Fort Pulaski National Monument Lease Authorization Act,” authorizes the park to lease a portion of the island to the pilots at fair market value.

**Law Enforcement and Structural Fire:** The park partners with the Savannah Metro Police Department to provide law enforcement services in and around the park. However, Fort Pulaski National Monument is federal land, and therefore subject to Federal Laws. Because local law enforcement entities cannot enforce Federal law, a gap exists between the park’s needs and current law enforcement resources. The park also has a relationship with the City of Tybee Island Fire Department for fire suppression and rescue operations.

*From left: Women in period dress inside Fort Pulaski; cannon fire illuminates Fort Pulaski during the park’s annual Candlelantern event.*



**Natural Resources Partners:** Fort Pulaski maintains its natural resources through a series of partnerships with federal, state, and educational institutions. The Georgia Department of Natural Resources provides wildlife and fisheries management, including oyster harvesting. A memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Georgia State Parks and Historic Sites and all NPS units in the state of Georgia allows for resource, personnel, and knowledge sharing with nearby sites such as Fort McAllister and Skidaway Island State Parks. The park also maintains an MOU with Chatham County for mosquito control activities and management of the McQueens Island Trail and Lazaretto Creek Boat Ramp. In addition, the park conducts joint research activities with the University of Georgia Marine Extension, and the Audubon Society provides monthly bird walks and natural resources tours of the park. The park occasionally shares maintenance resources with US Fish and Wildlife Service sites in the region.

**Cultural Resources:** The park partners with two resource protection groups, the Coastal Museum Association and Savannah Heritage Emergency Response, in order to ensure the safety of its cultural resources in the event of an emergency. The park also maintains educational partnerships with local universities, including Savannah Technical College, University of Georgia, Savannah College of Art and Design, and Savannah State University, creating enriching opportunities for students to learn on site, as well as employment pathways for students interested in cultural resource preservation. Fort Pulaski National Monument hopes to expand the use of these partnerships for preservation and education opportunities, especially through the Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Units Network.

**Visitation and Community Development:** Fort Pulaski partners with area business and tourism development groups in order to coordinate tourism efforts, share in visitor outreach, and ensure that the park meets the needs of gateway community businesses. These partners include Tybee Main Street, Tybee Island Tourism Council, and Visit Savannah Tourism Council, among others.



*Cockspur Lighthouse, operational from 1848–1909, located at the mouth of the Savannah River*

## Personnel

Over the course of fiscal year 2014, Fort Pulaski employed a total of 28 individual staff members, which includes position turnover and seasonal, student, and part-time employees. During the year, park staff included 11 different permanent full-time employees (PFT), two permanent subject-to-furlough\* employees, five seasonal employees who work fewer than six months a year (SEAS), one term employee (TERM) and seven total student temporary workers (STEP and SCEP).

Total hours worked by all employees equaled 16.8 full-time equivalents (FTEs) in FY 2014. One FTE equals 2,080 hours of regular work in a given year. There are three primary divisions in the park, with 6.2 FTE in Facilities and Resource Management, 7.5 FTE in Interpretation and Visitor Services, and 3.2 FTE in Management and Administration. The park has no FTE dedicated to Visitor and Resource Protection, relying instead on partnerships with local first responders.

*Staff and VIPs 'reach for the stars' in a flag folding interpretive activity.*

The park has experienced a significant amount of staff turnover over the past few years, including retirements and staff transfers. From FY 2009 to FY 2013, between five percent and 20 percent of the staff's permanent full-time or permanent subject-to-furlough employees left the staff each year.\*

\*Note: The term "permanent, subject-to-furlough" is broadly used within the National Park Service and refers to career seasonal positions. These positions are permanent appointments and the employees work under an agreed schedule that includes at least two weeks but no more than six months in nonduty/nonpay status. The term "term" employee refers to individuals employed year-round, but with contracts only initially guaranteed for up to four years.

## Volunteers

Volunteers at Fort Pulaski play an essential role in supporting the park's ability to carry out its mission. In FY 2014, 213 volunteers donated approximately 15,000 hours of their time to the park, the equivalent of more than seven full-time employees. Their work was valued at over \$337,000 in FY 2014.

Total VIP (Volunteer in Parks) hours have declined over the past five years. VIP hours went from a high of 21,500 in FY 2009 to a low of 10,000 in FY 2013. Although VIP hours rebounded to 15,000 in FY 2014, the overall trend over the past half decade has been the result of staff having less time to focus on recruiting and wait times for background checks ballooning. The VIP program is managed by the Interpretive and Education team, which relies on VIPs to add capacity for visitor services and interpretation. As a result, when VIP numbers decline, it further restricts staff capacity to focus on retention and recruitment for the VIP program. The park recently redistributed responsibilities for VIP program management and has identified the program as one of its core strategies to engage with the local community and increase programming opportunities for visitors.

These volunteers help bolster park services in all divisions, especially interpretation, where they staff the visitor center, run tours of the park, serve on the cannon crew for historic weapons demonstrations, and provide other interpretive services. They are a vital part of the success of the park's special events, like the holiday Candlelantern event commemorating the Confederate Nog party of 1861 in the historic fort. In addition, a large number of reenactor VIPs join the park during Veterans Day to reenact a day in the life at a major Civil War era military post, and during April to provide a 'living history' window into the battle at Fort Pulaski. In the maintenance division, VIPs provide valuable support, freeing up facilities and resources management staff for other tasks. For example, VIPs address most or all of the park's mowing needs, an otherwise time-consuming task for staff.



*In exchange for 30 hours of volunteering each week, RV volunteers get access to camping sites.*

Volunteers at Fort Pulaski  
play an essential role in  
supporting the park's ability  
to carry out its mission.

*A living history reenactor from the 48th NY Volunteer Regiment greets visitors as they arrive at the fort during Veterans Day.*



## Financial Snapshot

Fort Pulaski National Monument relies on a variety of fund sources, including congressional appropriations, visitor fees, and other revenues to fund its operations and programs.

**Appropriated Base:** The largest and most reliable portion of Fort Pulaski's budget comes from congressional appropriations, specifically the Operation of the National Park Service (ONPS) account. These "base" funds cover day-to-day operations, especially labor costs—in FY 2013, 80 percent of base funds were spent on personnel (salary and benefits). The park experienced a 27 percent increase in base funds between FY 2009 and FY 2010, from \$1.09 million to \$1.39 million. This increase was granted for the operation and interpretation of new park areas. Since FY 2010, the park has experienced a three percent decline in base funding, from a high of \$1.39 million in FY 2010 to \$1.35 million in FY 2014. Translating this into constant 2004 dollars, the park has experienced an 11 percent decline in "real" base funding from FY 2010 to FY 2014.

Some of these funding decreases are due to the impact of sequestration, including two consecutive years of cuts to the overall ONPS account for the National Park Service. All full-time permanent positions are funded out of base, and since their compensation packages have increased in cost over time, this further erodes the value of base beyond the three percent decline.

**Appropriated Non-base (Project Funds):** Fort Pulaski also receives funds for special projects or capital expenditures. These funds are allocated by Congress, and then awarded on a competitive or automatic basis at the regional or national levels among NPS units.

Project funding represented 17 percent of the budget in FY 2009. In FY 2010, the park received \$1.6 million from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). These funds were used for the revetment of the Cockspur Island Lighthouse to protect the lighthouse against the effects of shoreline erosion. The park's project funding dropped to two percent of the total budget in FY 2011 and FY 2012. In FY 2013, the park's project funding rebounded to 17 percent of the total budget, due to a renewed emphasis on procuring project funding by park administration. Outside of the large ARRA grant, most of the project funding over the past five years has come from:

- **Cultural Resources Fund:** To prepare for a Historic Structure Report (2012: \$147,000)
- **Youth Partnership Program:** To support the park's Student Historic Preservation Development Program (2010: \$39,000)
- **Cyclic Maintenance:** To replace the shingled roof on Fort Pulaski Maintenance Shop (2011: \$39,000) and for removal of hazardous trees and exotic species in the cultural landscape (2013: \$20,000)
- **Repair/Rehabilitation:** To install fire and security systems at the park's administrative office and the fort (2013: \$33,000) and to install a dust collection system in the maintenance shop (2013: \$14,000)

**Revenue:** Park revenue comes from two primary sources—fees charged to visitors for park entrance and funds from Eastern National’s bookstore sales at the park. In addition, the park receives funds from Special Use Permits for filming and photography in the park.

Entrance fees provide the largest portion of park revenue, ranging from \$268,000 to \$377,000 annually from FY 2009 to FY 2014. Congress authorizes the use of these revenues, and the park submits projects at the regional and national levels in order to expend these funds. NPS Scorecard data demonstrates that revenue per visitor increased from \$0.61/visitor to \$1.00/visitor from FY 2009 to FY 2013. Fort Pulaski National Monument earns more visitor revenue than the regional Southeast average (\$.77/visitor) but less revenue than the average NPS park nationally (\$1.10/visitor).

Over the past five years, fee revenue has been used for a variety of projects, including

- Repair of historical mortar in the fort (2009–2013: \$608,000 over five years)
- Cost of Collection operations, to fund the cost of running the entrance fee program (2009–2013: \$470,000 over five years)
- Planning, design and production of new outdoor signage (2012: \$188,000)
- Replacement of analog radios with digital equipment (2011: \$119,000)
- Lead abatement on Fort Pulaski casemate doors (2011: \$119,000)



*Fort Pulaski often serves as the backdrop for feature films, such as “The Conspirator” starring Robin Wright, which was filmed in 2009.*

## Division Summaries

### Current Fort Pulaski National Monument Organizational Chart



Fort Pulaski's staff is organized into three primary divisions: Management & Administration, Facilities & Resource Management, and Interpretation & Visitor Services. Although individuals primarily work in their divisions, the small staff size requires creative coverage of key tasks across divisions. For example, one of the park's maintenance workers is also an informational technology (IT) specialist, and the museum technician also has records management and curriculum development responsibilities. In addition, staff cite a "pitch in" attitude—maintenance workers will answer visitor questions about the fort, and interpretive staff will change a light bulb or a filter on an air conditioning unit when necessary.

*Summer interns in the administrative division compete in a nationwide photojournalism contest by dressing in Union Blues.*



*The administrative cottage, where the management and administration team and the division chiefs work.*

The Management & Administration division includes three full-time staff: the park superintendent, administrative officer, and administrative support assistant, as well as the IT specialist, whose time is split with the maintenance team. The Superintendent works with the management team—which includes the administrative officer and the two division chiefs—to set the park’s overall strategic direction, plan and organize internal park operations and communications, and manage external relationships. The division is responsible for the administration of the park, including park budgeting and finance, human resources, property management, records management, and IT. The division is largely funded by base appropriations, with compensation, benefits, and travel representing 86 percent of the division’s expenditures.

### Challenges and Opportunities

The primary role of the administrative division is to analyze and establish how the park can best use its financial resources. In the current constrained and quickly changing budgetary environment, the division has found it challenging to communicate to park staff about the resources available to the park and the tradeoffs that park managers face.

In addition to the budget, the administrative division manages park accountability using a variety of metrics for both internal and external stakeholders. This effort involves coordinating management of records about park history, maintenance and preservation, a challenge which will require a significant investment of staff time to modernize and preserve important information about the administration and resource preservation of the park.

The administrative division shares some key services, like HR, recruiting, contracting, and IT with the Southeast Regional Office in Atlanta. A number of systems and procedures have changed in the past few years, like the introduction of a new financial management system, new background check requirements for staff and volunteers, and centralization of human resource and contracting support into Regional centers. Adapting to these changes represents one of the division’s primary challenges.

## Facilities and Resource Management

The Facilities & Resource Management Division at Fort Pulaski is responsible for oversight, maintenance, and preservation of all the physical assets and natural and cultural resources at the park. As of the most recent audit year (FY 2008), Fort Pulaski manages 68 assets with a current replacement value (CRV) of \$236 million. Fortifications account for over 80 percent of the park's CRV despite representing less than 10 percent of the assets. This disparity is due to the extreme size and significance of Fort Pulaski itself, constructed over 150 years ago with 25 million bricks at a cost of over \$27 million in current dollars. Besides the fort, the park's assets include 67 other structures: a Spanish-American War-era artillery battery, multiple munitions bunkers, a historic cottage currently housing the administration offices, a visitor center, a picnic area, several historic cisterns, miles of walking trails, roads, parking areas, and utilities.

The Facilities & Resource Management Division operates as one contiguous unit but with multiple and distinct emphases. The first is maintenance, which ensures the operational success of the park grounds and facilities. Maintenance tasks include general park operations (e.g. custodial duties, debris removal, etc.), community system water operations, landscape management, exotic plant control and mechanical repair among many others. Staff take great care to maintain the grounds and facilities in excellent condition in order to ensure that the hundreds of daily visitors have an exceptional experience.

Despite the significant investment in maintaining the park's appearance and operations, the majority of the work performed by the Facilities & Resource Management Division is preservation maintenance. This effort ensures that the historic fabric of the fort and other historic structures and assets can be both enjoyed by current visitors and safeguarded for future generations. Work generally focuses on the ongoing repair and documentation of historic features rather than extensive replacement and new construction. Tuckpointing, parging, lime-washing and mortar work are just some of the tasks associated with preservation at Fort Pulaski. Many of the most significant assets of the park require preservation detail, especially the fort itself, the post-Civil War defensive structures, lighthouse, the cisterns, and the aging North Pier.



*From top left: Master mason Jerry Turner repoints brick within the fort; a Facilities and Resource Management staff member trims the demilune grass with a remote-controlled lawnmower; as the collectors of rainwater that served to sustain the troops, the many cisterns scattered around Cockspur Island were an important part of garrison life.*

### Challenges and Opportunities

The challenges facing the Facilities & Resource Management Division arise primarily from the breadth of their mandate. Tasked with performing the park's routine maintenance and ensuring the highest level of functionality for all visitor-facing services, the division also is responsible for preserving the historic structures and natural resources. A few key elements of the challenges they face:

- **Historic Preservation Requirements** Due to the delicacy of historic structures, certain special procedures are required in order to appropriately care for these resources. For example, the bricks on the fort were laid using traditional lime mortar, but when the Civilian Conservation Corps replaced the bricks in the 1930s, they used Portland cement instead. As a result, some of the mortar has begun to fail, requiring labor-intensive use of the appropriate historic techniques.
- **Variability of Funding Sources** Since FY 2010, revenue funding for Facilities & Resource Management has been as high as \$377,000 and as low as \$268,000. Even excluding the large ARRA grant in FY 2010, this division's project funding is also highly variable: it received about \$300,000 in project funding in FY 2009 and FY 2013, but only \$40,000 in FY 2011 and no project funding in FY 2012. This unpredictability can make long-term planning difficult. In addition, when proper long-term planning does not occur, it can increase the variability of project funds over time.
- **Skill Gaps** The division suffers from skill gaps in trade areas, including carpentry, plumbing and electrical skills. Given the park's existing financial constraints, the division is focusing on training current staff and investigating opportunities for in-kind service sharing to fill in these knowledge gaps.
- **Cockspur Island's Environment** Fort Pulaski's coastal environment has a number of features that expedite aging effects on buildings, including wind, humidity, hurricanes, salt water and a dearth of shade. These challenges are exacerbated by the twin impacts of increased riparian traffic in the Savannah River and climate change, which brings rising waters, more frequent storms, and exotic plant growth. As twenty of Fort Pulaski's sixty-eight (30 percent) assets were constructed in the 1800s, this presents a particularly significant historic preservation challenge at Fort Pulaski.

## Interpretation & Visitor Services

The Interpretation & Visitor Services Division is the public face of the park, sharing the stories of Fort Pulaski through interpretive and educational programs, welcoming and orienting visitors, managing the park's public affairs and social media, and collecting fee revenue.

The staff of the division consists of three full-time visitor use assistants (VUAs), who welcome and orient visitors to the park, and collect and manage fee revenues. The interpretation side of the division includes a supervisor, four full-time interpretive staff rangers, and additional seasonal or student interpretive staff depending upon funding. They develop and conduct tours and orientations of the fort, educational programs for school groups, cannon and musket demonstrations, and provide specialized tours to visiting military groups.

The division also coordinates a number of special events throughout the year, like the Christmas Candlelantern Tour, which commemorates the Confederate Nog party of 1861 with night-time tours of the historic fort by candle light and oil lamps, hot ciders and cookies, period music and caroling, and night-time weapons firings. The division also holds annual Veterans Day events with the 48th New York Infantry Regiment, which re-creates many aspects of daily life at a major Civil War-era post. The interpretive rangers coordinate events to commemorate the seizure of Fort Pulaski by the Georgia militia on January 3, 1861, and the Battle of Fort Pulaski, on April 10, 1862.

The interpretive goals of the division are to:

- Provide visitors an opportunity to understand the objectives, strategy, and battle tactics of the siege of Fort Pulaski in 1862;
- Interpret Fort Pulaski's place in American history, particularly its role in the evolution of national defense systems and weapons; and,
- Interpret the natural environment, particularly the coastal salt marsh ecosystem.

In addition to interpretation and visitor services, the division manages the park's public relations and social media, coordinates the volunteer (VIP) program for the park, and cares for the park's collections of museum artifacts. Volunteers support the division by staffing the visitor center, providing tours of the fort, and serving on the cannon and musket crews during historic weapons demonstrations.



*A Fort Pulaski Ranger teaches kids the right way to fold a flag.*



*Park staff sharing history with the next generation.*

### Challenges and Opportunities

The primary challenge faced by the Interpretation and Visitor Services division is adequately staffing key programs and activities. Seasonal staffing was cut in FY 2013, and total division staffing was further reduced in FY 2014. The reduction in available staff for programs through 2014 is driven by a few key factors, including:

- **Fee Collection:** The fee booth needs to be open in order to maintain park revenues. Fort Pulaski staff estimates that fee collection decreases by approximately 40 percent when visitors are routed to the visitor center instead, because visitors choose not to pay or forget to pay. Park regulations require that staff, rather than volunteers, manage the fee booth, and staffing shortages in FY 2013 and FY 2014 forced interpreters into the fee booth and away from their collateral and interpretation duties.
- **Funding Constraints:** From FY 2010 to FY 2012, the division was able to hire seasonal workers to augment the capacity of full-time staff. One of the park's responses to sequestration was to restrain seasonal hiring in FY 2013 and FY 2014, which led to some of the decline in capacity for the division.

- **Volunteer Program Decline:** The number of volunteers has dipped in recent years due to decreased staff capacity to focus on the program and increases in security and background check requirements. The challenges mentioned above have restricted staff's capacity to focus on the volunteer program—this decreased volunteer availability, which in turn gave staff even less time to prioritize VIP recruitment and retention.
- **Hiring Challenges:** Increased security requirements and delays in human resources processing have prevented the division from successfully hiring seasonal staff during the peak season, from April to September.

The result of these challenges is that the interpretive rangers spend a disproportionate amount of time in the fee booth and visitor center, and offer decreased interpretive programming as a result, with fewer tours and historic weapons demonstrations available for visitors. In addition, the division has not been able to develop a natural resource interpretive program and scout camping program because of a lack of staff time. The park has already begun to address some of these issues—the division recently hired a third employee for the fee booth.

### Historic Weapons Program

Fort Pulaski is the site where rifled cannons first successfully breached masonry fortifications, forcing a hasty surrender of the fort and the closure of the Port of Savannah, and it signaled the end of such fortifications as a means of coastal defense. One of the ways the park shares this story is through the historic weapons program. This program uses the power of live demonstrations to bring the differences between these types of military technologies to life, delighting visitors with riveting presentations of cannon firings. Each Saturday, a group of six to eight interpretive rangers and volunteers dressed as Civil War soldiers fire two cannons—a field howitzer and a Parrott rifle—to illustrate the differences between these weapons and explain how Fort Pulaski fell.

In addition, the program uses regular musket demonstrations to demonstrate life at Fort Pulaski—the Union and Confederate soldiers of the time would have practiced with their muskets while stationed at the fort. These one-person demonstrations provide some of the thrill of the cannon firings without the time and personnel requirements.




*A black powder cannon demonstration.*

## Strategic Priorities

In the summer of 2014, staff at Fort Pulaski National Monument identified and reached consensus on four key priorities that will guide the park's strategic direction for the next three to five years. Each priority is compatible with the park's General Management Plan (2013), which articulates a long-term vision for the park, consistent with its enabling legislation.

These priorities are supported by specific goals, each of which has a number of corresponding action items designed to help the park attain its stated goals. The chart below tracks a subset of the action items identified by the park management team; additional action items will be addressed internally. As described below, the park has made great strides toward meeting many of these goals, but additional resources will be needed to undertake the next steps required to fully meet the park's priorities and mission.

 Improve Stewardship of Resources		
Goals	Recent Wins	Future Actions
Promote research in order to enable science-based decision making and understanding/recognition of the resource	Finalized basic natural resource inventories and initiated long-term monitoring of a subset of the park's natural resources by the Southeast Coast Inventory and Monitoring Network (SECN).	<p>Promote Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Units (CESU) partnerships with local institutions, taking advantage of an existing park service-university relationship.</p> <p>Use National Park Service research permit website, a clearinghouse for park-based research positions, to identify and recruit researchers to fill needs.</p>
Institutionalize best practices in historical preservation	<p>Fortified Cockspur Island Lighthouse foundation and structure beginning in 1999.</p> <p>Completed Historic Structure Reports for the Quarantine Station and the Cockspur Island Lighthouse and initiated a Historic Structure Report for Fort Pulaski in 2014.</p>	<p>Create standardized operating procedures for historic preservation treatment, including quality control, data management, monitoring, and skills training.</p> <p>Engage with communities of practice for preservation of coastal fortifications, lighthouses and other historic resources in order to share knowledge and leverage capacity.</p>
Identify needs and develop plans for cultural and natural resource management	<p>Implemented the Southeast Coast Exotic Plant Management program in partnership with eleven other parks in the Southeast Region.</p> <p>Completed Cultural Landscape Report, Cultural Landscape Inventory and General Management Plan.</p> <p>Designated McQueens Island as proposed wilderness marine protected area.</p>	<p>Finalize "State of the Park" and conduct investigation every five years to re-establish a baseline understanding of park's resource management progress.</p> <p>Complete condition assessments for all unappraised resources and update databases and protection plans for each.</p> <p>Conduct shoreline erosion study to understand shoreline dynamics and inform shoreline protection/climate change adaptation plan.</p>



### Bolster Performance in Park Operations

Goals	Recent Wins	Future Actions
Adopt best practices in administrative processes	<p>Increased training opportunities for new and veteran staff members to enhance park capabilities.</p> <p>Engaged in priority setting process to identify priorities, goals, and action items as a part of park Business Plan.</p>	<p>Realign work and training plans based on priorities, goals, and action items in business plan. Communicate updated responsibilities within teams and park.</p> <p>Implement parkwide employee recognition program to better highlight staff contributions.</p> <p>Enable resource management and facilitate researcher access to park's archives and collections by bringing records management proficiency up to recommended federal standards.</p> <p>Develop a parkwide tracking tool to assign tasks, roles, milestones, and budgets for projects.</p>
Explore creative approaches to meet staffing needs	<p>Worked with Savannah Technical College to create architectural schematics for cottage and Visitor center.</p>	<p>Work with at least two local academic or military institutions per year, including Historically Black Colleges, to recruit employees, interns and volunteers.</p> <p>Create park orientation for new hires and volunteers that includes National Park Service Mission and Fort Pulaski-specific resources.</p> <p>Explore opportunities to share knowledge and personnel resources with NPS Southeast region, nearby park units, or other local institutions.</p>
Improve health and safety program at the park	<p>Developed parkwide fitness initiative with local YMCA.</p>	<p>Deploy new Operational Leadership smartphone app to assist park staff with risk assessment in park operations.</p>
Improve environmental stewardship	<p>Implemented in-park staff bicycle program to replace golf cart usage.</p> <p>Completed Integrated Solid Waste Plan.</p>	<p>Implement Integrated Solid Waste Plan and continue to refine recycling and waste program.</p> <p>Perform a low-cost energy efficiency and solar audit of the park to identify most cost-effective savings opportunities.</p> <p>Design and use a green procurement tool in order to promote environmentally friendly purchases.</p>



*From top: Sometimes the easiest way to get a heavy cannon on top of the Fort is by helicopter; Cockspur Island lighthouse, seen at low tide, receives foundational support.*

## Strategic Priorities



*A wonderful place for visitors of all varieties, Fort Pulaski is a favorite spot for many locals to walk their puppies while appreciating the national monument's history.*



### Maintain High Quality Visitor Experience and Expand Opportunities

#### Goals

#### Recent Wins

#### Future Actions

Expand physical and programmatic access

Developed, constructed and installed new information signs, which provided additional interpretation regarding difficult-to-access assets, including Cockspur Lighthouse.

Created a map detailing artillery in the historic fort.

Selected as one of the initial Instagram parks in a nationwide National Park Service test program.

Create electronic apps or interpretive media to better interpret difficult-to-access resources, like the lighthouse and terreplein.

Complete parkwide audit to understand current accessibility gaps and develop projects to implement its recommendations.

Provide exposure to a wider variety of significant resources and stories

Created guide to park trail system.

Initiated partnership with the Audubon Society to do monthly bird walks on Cockspur Island.

Developed relationships with local artists and showcased a local exhibit in park visitor center during spring of 2014.

Perform research in order to identify expanded themes and stories for next Long Range Interpretive Plan.

Research, create training for, and acquire materials to expand interpretive program to include the construction village and the role of Fort Pulaski in the Underground Railroad.

Use guest lecturers from other institutions to make connections between Fort Pulaski and its place along the Georgia coast and Savannah.

Develop and implement public archeology program to research and interpret construction village.

Attract new and different audiences

Continued development of printed interpretive media, such as the "Asians in the Civil War" site bulletin.

Partner with other museums in the area, including members of the Coastal Museum Association to leverage capacity and expand park story.

Pilot extended-hours program to attract new audiences less inclined to visit the park during current operating hours.



### Create Better Connections with the Local Community

Goals	Recent Wins	Future Actions
Nurture existing and establish new partnerships	Finalized friends group agreement with the Friends of the Cockspur Island Lighthouse.	Collaborate with Tybee Main Street program and tourism council to highlight role as gateway community as a part of the National Park Service Centennial Challenge.  Support friends group by assisting with development grants and fundraising events.
Expand local VIP programs	Hosted ten different groups of re-enactors in 2013, including the 48th New York Infantry, the 22nd Georgia Heavy Artillery, and the 8th Georgia Infantry.	Develop and disseminate print and web recruiting materials, and conduct event outreach to local volunteers.
Conduct more direct outreach & education in the community	Attended public history fair at Georgia Southern University.	Pilot curriculum-based program to meet Georgia's 5th grade Social Studies standards in a local school.
Develop & execute more programs and events to engage the local community	Joined the Savannah Interagency Diversity Committee, a committee of federal and local agencies that promote diversity.	Establish local artist-in-residence program to connect the park to Savannah's artistic and performance communities.  Focus on expanding youth programming in signature events.



*One of Fort Pulaski's many partners, the Coast Guard pitches in during National Public Lands Day.*

## Centennial Challenge

On August 25, 1916, President Woodrow Wilson signed the Organic Act, officially creating the National Park Service. Ninety-eight years later, the NPS has grown in ways that would have been hard to imagine at that time. Beyond the expansive tracts of the majestic west, the NPS also oversees smaller rural and urban parks representing the diversity of the country, homes of civil rights leaders, and even marine regions. Recognizing that the next century will see even more changes than the previous one, an ambitious plan has been presented for the stewardship and management of NPS' next hundred years. It was with those tenets in mind that the staff and management team of Fort Pulaski identified their four priorities for the next three to five years, and there is significant alignment between the national priorities in the Centennial Challenge Goals, and those for Fort Pulaski's individual development.

### Centennial Challenge Goals

#### Connecting People to Parks

- Welcome and engage diverse communities through culturally relevant park stories and experiences that are accessible to all.

#### Advancing the NPS Education Mission

- Collaborate with partners and education institutions to expand NPS education programs and the use of parks as places of learning.

#### Preserving America's Special Places

- Cultivate excellence in science and scholarship as a foundation for park planning, policy, decision making, and education.

#### Enhancing Professional & Organizational Excellence

- Build a more flexible and adaptive organization with a culture that encourages innovation, collaboration, and entrepreneurship.
- Modernize and streamline NPS business systems.

### Fort Pulaski's Priorities

#### Maintain High Quality Visitor Experience and Expand Opportunities

- Provide exposure to a wider variety of significant resources and stories.
- Attract new and different audiences.

#### Create Better Connections with the Local Community

- Nurture existing & establish new partnerships.
- Conduct more direct outreach & education in the community.

#### Improve Stewardship of Resources

- Promote research in order to enable science-based decision making and understanding/recognition of the resource.

#### Bolster Performance in Park Operations

- Cultivate an environment of shared responsibility and individual accountability.
- Adopt best practices in administrative processes and tracking.

These pages describe several potential budget scenarios and estimates of the corresponding impacts on park operations. These represent the park's internal estimates for strategic planning purposes, and are not meant to communicate the intent of future congressional appropriations.

Fort Pulaski, like all National Park Service units, has weathered a challenging and variable fiscal climate over the past three years. It experienced a steady decline in base funding from FY 2010 to FY 2013, and was confronted with uncertain appropriations during a series of continuing resolutions and sequestration. This period of uncertainty was followed by the government shutdown and then further cuts to base funding during FY 2013. Additionally, the park was forced to absorb many increases in costs without a commensurate increase in appropriations.

In response, Fort Pulaski undertook cost-cutting measures and made conservative decisions to continue its mission. To cut costs, the park implemented a mowing reduction program to save on fuel and equipment replacement costs and staff time. Fort Pulaski experienced high levels of staff turnover during this period, and chose not to refill positions right away in order to make strategic decisions based on a better understanding of the park's projected resources. In addition, the park cut back on seasonal hiring in order to focus on critical services during the budget cuts. These conservative choices gave the park the flexibility to rehire strategically for key positions over the next year.



*One of the first national flags of the Confederate States of America, this flag has 11 stars indicating the 11 states which considered themselves part of the new country. This flag would have been flown at Fort Pulaski until the Union victory in April 1862.*

## Potential Appropriated Base Budget Scenarios

Based on its recent experiences with flat or declining budgets, the park explored three base budget funding scenarios for FY 2015 through FY 2019:

- (1) Base funding remains at FY 2015 levels through FY 2019;
- (2) Base funding drops two percent in FY 2016;
- (3) Base funding drops two percent in FY 2016, an additional two percent in FY 2017, then remains flat through FY 2019

These scenarios and their associated funding gaps are represented in the graph below. Since park base funding is subject to regional assessments, this analysis assumes that 1.4 percent of appropriated funds will be removed for regional assessments, uniform payments, and other support services.

The following assumptions underlie the expenditure projections:

- Personnel expenses are based on projected staffing levels, including current permanent full-time and permanent subject-to-furlough staff, as well as additional positions projected to be re-filled. Park management anticipates that these staffing needs would be filled as permanent subject-to-furlough, term, seasonal or detail staff from other parks in order to preserve flexibility. These projections do not include any additional hiring above these levels.
- Salary costs grow with projected step increases and reflect a one percent annual pay cost increase.
- Non-personnel expenses grow at 2.3 percent annually to reflect anticipated inflationary impacts.

The chart below and table at right demonstrate that recent turnover has reduced overall staffing levels below base-appropriated amounts, because the park conservatively chose not to rehire in an uncertain budget environment. This leaves Fort Pulaski with flexibility to hire to fill the gaps left by those positions, and potentially creates a short-term surplus in FY 2015. Fort Pulaski plans to make hiring decisions in FY 2015 to fill critical gaps in resource management, partnerships, and planning. Once staffing has returned to an appropriate level, projections demonstrate that personnel expenditures will grow in subsequent years, which will produce a deficit in FY 2017 assuming flat base funding and in FY 2016 assuming a two percent budget decrease.

Projections indicate that new staff compensation, moderate levels of inflation and regular employee advancement up pay schedules will shrink the surplus over time in the most optimistic future budget scenario and eliminate the surplus by FY 2017 under more conservative budget projections. During the projected surplus in FY 2015, the park will invest strategically in a flexible workforce, expanded interpretive equipment, curricular supplies, and volunteer outreach materials to achieve park priorities.

If the highly unpredictable budget climate of the past few years continues, lower congressional allocations may occur. This forecast suggests that these reductions could force the park to consider structural changes by FY 2019. For example, the park may choose to close the visitor center or reduce programs in order to maintain focus on park priorities while addressing projected shortfalls.

## Potential Appropriated Base Budget Scenarios

### Fort Pulaski Expenditures: FY 2009–FY 2019

#### Base Budget Financial Projections

	FY 2013 <sup>1</sup>	FY 2014 <sup>2</sup>	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019
<b>Appropriated Base: Flat Allocation</b>	\$1,319,318	\$1,298,585	\$1,337,445	\$1,337,445	\$1,337,445	\$1,337,445	\$1,337,445
<b>Projected Personnel Expenditures<sup>3</sup></b>							
Labor Expenditures							
Interpretation & Visitor Services	\$415,727	\$388,183	\$351,739	\$379,626	\$384,527	\$393,886	\$397,272
Administration & Management	\$316,583	\$249,153	\$339,016	\$344,098	\$344,974	\$349,180	\$353,324
Facilities & Resource Management	\$322,953	\$352,847	\$350,018	\$354,067	\$354,187	\$356,702	\$360,760
<b>Total Personnel Expenditures</b>	\$1,055,263	\$990,182	\$1,040,772	\$1,077,791	\$1,083,688	\$1,099,768	\$1,111,356
<b>Projected Non-personnel Expenditures<sup>4</sup></b>	\$264,055	\$308,403	\$190,911	\$195,302	\$199,795	\$204,389	\$209,090
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	\$1,319,318	\$1,298,585	\$1,231,683	\$1,273,093	\$1,283,483	\$1,304,157	\$1,320,446
<b>Projected Surplus/(Deficit)</b>							
Flat Allocation	(\$0.00)	--	\$105,761	\$64,351	\$53,962	\$33,287	\$16,999
2% Reduction in FY 2016	\$0.00	--	\$105,761	\$37,602	\$27,213	\$6,539	(\$9,750)
2% Reduction in FY 2017	\$0.00	--	\$105,761	\$37,602	\$464	(\$20,210)	(\$36,499)

1. Represents FY 2013 actual budget and expenditures.

2. Represents FY 2014 actual budget and expenditures.

3. Personnel expenditure projections were produced by the Fort Pulaski NM Budget Cost Projection report. These costs include mandatory 1% salary increases, as well as performance-based step increases.

4. Non-personnel expenditure projections from FY 2015–FY 2019 are based on an FY 2009–FY 2013 five-year average with a 2.3% inflator.

## Primary Cost Drivers

- **Permanent Staff:** The park's largest expense is permanent salaries and benefits, which represented 80 percent of appropriated base budget in FY 2013. This percentage is slightly below the Southeast regional average of 80.7 percent in the 2012 NPS Scorecard. Opportunities to reduce this category of costs are limited to retirements or other staffing vacancies. Fort Pulaski has had a number of retirements in recent years, so has some budget flexibility, and it is essential that personnel decisions are made carefully in order to ensure the park's long term financial stability.

There are a number of additional cost drivers beyond the park's control, including:

- **Inflation:** Although the costs of goods and services, like utilities and contracted services, may increase over time, the park's budget may not, which limits purchasing power. The cumulative effect of inflation from FY 2010 to FY 2014 reduced the purchasing power of a dollar by about 9.1 percent, meaning that Fort Pulaski would have needed a budget increase of 9.1 percent to keep up with inflation (in comparison to the three percent decrease it experienced over that period).
- **Mandatory Pay Increases:** There are two primary means of default increases in salary for staff: within-grade pay increases and congressionally-mandated salary increases. Federal compensation follows a grade and step pay system, under which employees are eligible for increases of 2.5 percent to 3.5 percent every one to three years, based on good performance. In the past, Congress granted federal employees annual pay increases to help keep up with inflation, ranging from one percent to 2.5 percent. However, only one of the past four fiscal years included these congressionally mandated pay increases.
- **Support Costs:** Many positions require specialized equipment and training certifications. These costs are referred to as "support costs," and can vary significantly based on the position. The trainings are often safety focused. For example, portions of Fort Pulaski's maintenance staff are trained to be heavy equipment operators, and two of the interpretive rangers are trained in safety to supervise a black powder program. Some of these support costs can be spread over time, but the park must invest significant resources early in a staff member's career. Further, there are required annual or biannual refresher training courses, which create an additional fixed cost for the park in order to meet NPS standards.



*High tide at the Cockspur Island lighthouse.*

## Cost Reduction, Operational Efficiency and Revenue Generation Strategies

After the uncertainty of the FY13 budget sequestration, the FY14 government shutdown and three consecutive years of appropriated base funding cuts, Fort Pulaski has committed itself to focusing on streamlining operations and curtailing costs while maintaining priority functions. Accordingly, the following section explores possible medium- or long-term strategies for cost reduction, operational efficiencies, and revenue generation. Successful implementation of these strategies will assist the park in weathering further unanticipated funding reductions. In turn, these strategies will minimize potential impacts on park resources and the visitor experience.



*A Fort Pulaski Ranger provides a musket demonstration.*

### Cost Reduction

- ➖ **Grow VIP Base to Support Black Powder Programming:** Maintaining Fort Pulaski's excellent black powder programming requires a significant investment in resources, especially staff time. Yet as an integral element of the park's story and as a favorite of both visitors and staff alike, Fort Pulaski intends to preserve the program by ensuring that volunteers are utilized to their maximum extent. Fort Pulaski intends to man the cannon crew with only one paid staff member and more volunteers in order to allow additional staff members to work on other interpretive projects. This simple decision can save the park thousands of dollars per year, which will help ensure the continuation of the program and allow Fort Pulaski to increase the number of weekly demonstrations. These choices align with the park's stated goal of expanding programmatic access.
- ➖ **Develop Opportunities for In-Kind Service Sharing:** Fort Pulaski occasionally has staffing needs that require specialized workers, but that do not justify a full-time position. For example, having someone on staff for intermittent tasks like heavy equipment operation is convenient but prohibitively costly and so Fort Pulaski generally hires private contractors in situations that call for such a specialty. Instead, since such staff expertise exists throughout the local system of Department of Interior sites, the park should evaluate operational gaps and current workloads of neighboring sites in order to fill these needs. This strategy ultimately allows for overall reduced personnel costs, increased workforce flexibility, and improved work quality via increased specialization.

## Cost Reduction, Operational Efficiency and Revenue Generation Strategies

### Operational Efficiencies

- + Align Park Staffing with Visitor Needs:** Analysis of the park's entrance fee data reveals that park staffing and programming could be better aligned with visitor schedules. To meet this goal, the park should:

  - **Revise schedules to match visitation:** Current data indicates that the lowest visitation day is Friday.
  - **Improve data collection at the entrance station:** Paying particular attention to age of visitor and time of entry, so that Fort Pulaski can tailor its interpretive programs to specific audiences.
  - **Adjust interpretive program times to better align with visitation trends:** Data indicates that scheduling tours at 11:30 a.m. instead of 10:30 a.m. would allow for an additional 252 weekly participants in the fort tours.
  - **Improve interpretive program data collection:** Collecting higher resolution data, ensuring consistent data collection across all staff, and collecting more information on activities in the visitor center will provide the insight necessary to adjust programming to minimize staffing costs while maximizing visitor experience.
- + Pursue Strategies that Multiply the Impact of Staff Time:** There are a number of strategies available to Fort Pulaski that would maximize the value of Fort Pulaski's small staff:

  - **Expand Local VIP Program:** Local VIP numbers have declined over the last five years, as staff has had less time to focus on recruiting, and wait times for background checks have ballooned. Although the park cannot control these security requirements, it should ensure that the VIP coordinator spends at least half of her time on VIP recruitment and retention. This focus will help the park achieve its priority of enhancing its connections to the local community while increasing the programming capacity of the Interpretation Division. If the VIP program were returned to its FY 2009 levels of over 20,000 hours per year, it would add over \$220,000 in value to the park each year.
  - **Increase Partnership Capacity:** Fort Pulaski's next managerial hire should have a significant park partnerships portfolio and demonstrated expertise in nurturing and maintaining capacity- and opportunity-enhancing partnerships. A hire with these skills would significantly enhance the park's ability to address either resource management or interpretation and education priorities by bringing flexible but expert-level knowledge into the work force.
- + Strategically Assign New Hires:** Before hiring additional staff, teams at Fort Pulaski should engage in a division-by-division analysis of knowledge and skill gaps in order to fill staffing positions strategically and deliberately.
- + Consider Alternative Staffing Strategies for Projects:** Most Fort Pulaski project proposals have assumed that park staff would complete the majority of the project. Current FOPU staff are fully subscribed, and Fort Pulaski should write projects designed to outsource to contractors where possible. This approach is especially appropriate for the Repair and Rehabilitation Fund, which provides funding for deferred maintenance projects on high-priority, mission-critical assets.



*National Public Lands Day attracts volunteers from all over the region.*

## Cost Reduction, Operational Efficiency and Revenue Generation Strategies

### Revenue Generation

- + Promote In-Park Cultural Performances:** Currently, the celebrated two-day Candle Lantern event in December generates an additional \$2,500 in revenue from entrance fees paid by the 500–600 participants. Bolstering the signature events portfolio to include artistic performance opportunities would not only create more revenue but also draw more people, especially locals, to the park. This increased local attendance will, in turn, help achieve a park priority by improving awareness of lesser known historical stories, and by strengthening ties to Savannah's local community of artists, further enhancing park relevance.
- + Fully Scope Projects in Project Management Information System (PMIS):** Currently, some Fort Pulaski projects in PMIS do not capture the full cost of completing projects for the park, neglecting overhead costs like planning, project management, and compliance. Fort Pulaski should review PMIS entries to ensure that projects are fully scoped to include the full value of staff time required to complete the project.
- + Maximize Park Usage of Project Funds:** Fort Pulaski has historically struggled to submit projects outside of facilities and resource management. Other divisions should consider the possibility of using project and fee revenue funds to augment their existing base funding. This could enable increased hiring of seasonal employees to grow programming, or could provide project funding for program development, which could free up other forms of funding for short-term hires. Fort Pulaski's project funding has been highly variable and dependent on staff effort over time, representing two percent of the total budget in 2011 and 2012, and 17 percent of the total budget in 2013. This recent increase was in large part due to a renewed emphasis on procuring project funding by park administration.
- + Pursue Partnerships with Funding Opportunities:** Although park units cannot directly raise funds, they can partner with educational non-profits who can actively pursue grants that enhance the mission of the park. Fort Pulaski should consider the possibility for outside funding as it develops new partnerships.



*Above: During the war, Henry Key Moore took various photographs of military installments, this one capturing not only G Company of NY's 48th Regiment in the foreground but also one of the earliest known photographs of modern baseball in the background. Notice the batter or "striker" on the far left in the back.*

*Left: So much more than just fee collection, Fort Pulaski's Visitor Use Assistants are the park's orienteers and greeters.*

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Business Management Group



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